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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. To Ponder ...
2. "Leadership Calls ... Stir Your Soul"
3. Choose ... The Leadership Path Individual Contribution
4. Reading Choices
5. Jean's Latest Choice(s)
6. It's New! www.constructivechoices.com

1. TO PONDER

from: Minute Motivators for Leaders by Stan Toler

Leaders are decision makers.
"Efficiency is doing things right.
Effectiveness is doing the right thing."
- Alan Nelson

Leaders march to the mission.
"The growth and development of people is
the highest calling of leadership."
- Harvey S. Firestone

2. LEADERSHIP CALLS... Stir Your Soul ...

I never intentionally tell myself I want to be a leader nor take any specific actions to get to a place called "Leadership." I have often (and sometimes still do) discredit my role as a leader amongst my professional colleagues. How is it that when I deny my leadership character because I just can't see it - that others scream loudly that it is so obvious? I believe the development of my leadership character started with my saying "yes" to offering an individual contribution. This contribution often is in support of a team or group of people and before I know it...I found myself in leadership roles.

What stirs my soul to say "yes?" It isn't always that I want to make a difference. No, more times than not, I believe I can do the job or it is a job I want to learn. I can easily step up and into the task slowly, take ownership, and begin to believe I can make some sort of difference, but to me that means something else. No, for me, it isn't about making a difference, but the curiosity of what can be different - how can I make it better, more enriching, filled with learning, not just different. Without fail, what has worked for me are my strengths of wanting to support others to engage their personal uniqueness, talents and strengths and to enrich the whole group and group processes. Ultimately, my aim is for excellence - primarily for me.

When I look back over the last (oh, let's just say) 40 years, I remember many times of being in a leadership position. I don't believe I ever consciously went in search of that role. Actually, many times when asked to consider a leadership role, I very forcefully said "No!" But the beliefs from others in the asking and my initial "No" reaction did something to stir my soul. I began to ask "Why or why not?" My acceptance, when I finally did get around to saying "yes," is a yes always to the gift of time and a special "thank you"

to others in support of my taking on the role. The lessons are invaluable, the time commitment impacts my days differently, and learning, oh the learning. That never ends.

The individual contribution doesn't remain personal for long, nor does it just reside in the satisfaction of having been an effective leader. The individual contribution transitions and directs change. More important, it is my touchpoint to others. The individual contribution is the connection to the character, values and special gifts I receive from others I work with. And those individual contributions begin to stir my soul yet again.

What stirs your soul when you hear the leadership call? What are the individual contributions you have to offer? Is this your call to leadership? And as you lead, what continues to stir your soul time and again?

3. CHOOSE "Your Individual Contribution One by One"

Choose to offer value here...and ... Choose to offer value here. Your contribution is accepted and recognized for the gift it is meant to be.

Influence others ...build your character in this lifetime... use your brains and borrow from others ...chart the course...risk a little...enlist the cooperation of others ...develop the greatness in others...learn new today and lead new tomorrow.

Stir your soul ... your individual contribution is your answer to the call for leadership.

4. READING CHOICES

I have always loved reading quotes and connecting personally with the message. IN an airport recently, I picked up a small pocketbook titled "Minute Motivators for Leaders" by Stan Toler. It's a quick read, great inspirational messages and words that stirred my soul.

For fun reading, I am now a member of a local women's book club. This great group of friends have chosen to read a variety of books that keep a dialogue going with a focus on inspirational women. We just finished "Gilda Radnor: An Intimate Portrait." Now taking a different twist to the reading and starting "Revenge of a Middle-aged Woman" by Elizabeth Buchan. Our choices are to interject our reading with autobiographies, biographies and fiction...should prove to be an interesting year of reading! Upcoming selections include "Trailblazers (Women of the West), "The Lady, The Chef and the Courtesan," and Madame Secretary (Madeline Albright). Any suggestions to add...pass them along....

5. JEAN'S LATEST CHOICES

A hold on the Affraction Project due to time constraints...recent travels to visit family I haven't seen in many years ... upcoming travel to spend time with immediate family in AZ ... conscious change to the work year schedule to include a month off for personal rest and relaxation ... the biennial European journey with girlfriends and a sister - 2004 is April in Paris ...saying yes to speaking at 2 the International Mentoring Association and ISPI conferences the end of April ... answering the call of leadership to stir my soul.

6. IT'S NEW! ... The CCI Website!

After a year of playing with some small updates to the site, www.constructivechoices.com now has a new look and some new features. Check it out - your comments, suggestions and constructive viewpoints are always welcome. A very special THANK YOU to Theresa Silva for her commitment, expertise and willingness to play with new ideas - she is one very talented web designer AND to Bobbie Allaire for her revisions, questions that kept us on track and keeping the focus.

The website can best be viewed using Internet Explorer as Netscape does not allow flash items to materialize. If you are an AOL user, you may have to use the F5 key to refresh and reload to get to the new site.

The Constructive Choices AUDIENCE:

- * Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- * New Managers (and aspiring leaders) ready to discover unique strengths to establish a leading community,
- * Individuals wanting to sort through the choices to build a more fulfilling life, and
- * Coaches who choose to reach out and support the choices of others.

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